

**Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries  
(CISSL)**

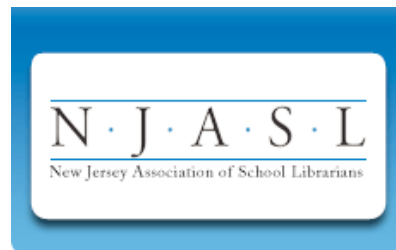
**ONE COMMON GOAL: STUDENT LEARNING**

**Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations of  
the New Jersey School Library Survey Phase 2**

**School of Communication and Information  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
September 2011**

**On behalf of the  
New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL)  
USA**

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**ISBN: 978-09829-590-15**

## Executive Summary

### Phase 2 NJASL Research Study: One Common Goal: Student Learning

The overall research agenda of Phases 1 and 2 of this study seeks:

- (a) To construct a picture of the status of New Jersey's school libraries in the educational landscape of New Jersey;
- (b) To understand the contribution of quality school libraries to education in New Jersey;
- (c) To understand the contextual and professional dynamics that inhibit and enable school libraries to contribute significantly to education in New Jersey, and
- (d) To make recommendations to NJ stakeholders to develop a sustained and long term program of capacity building and evidence-based continuous improvement of school libraries in New Jersey.

Phase 2 of the NJASL study, conducted from September 2010 to August 2011, examined 12 schools whose librarians reported high levels of collaboration with teachers in the survey administered in Phase 1 of the study. Focus groups in the schools were comprised of the school principal, the school librarian, and classroom teachers, including specialists such as special needs and literacy teachers. The focus groups addressed the following themes:

- **Theme 1:** In what ways does the school support learning through the school library? (pp 36-63)
- **Theme 2:** In what ways, if any, does the school library contribute to learning? (pp 57-154)
- **Theme 3:** What do students learn through their interaction and engagement with the school library? (pp 75-154)
- **Theme 4:** How do you envision the future of school libraries? (pp 154-172)

The narratives that address these questions collectively portray the school library and the work of school librarians as essential to learning in information and technology intense environments.

#### **Theme 1: In what ways does the school support learning through the school library? (pp36-63)**

##### **Educational beliefs and school culture (pp 36-49)**

A strong set of educational beliefs and a collaborative school culture were common to these schools, enabling the school library as learning and pedagogical center, and the school librarian as an information learning specialist for faculty and students. In the broad educational context of schooling, these educators share the following beliefs:

- Learning in an increasingly globalized, information-rich and technological world is complex and it takes a whole school, with a committed vision, sound pedagogy, and strong information and technology infrastructure, working together to provide relevant educational opportunities and learning experiences for students;
- A whole school approach values learning and working collaboratively as an essential competency for quality teachers and quality teaching;

- Effective teachers and quality teaching are the most important factor for creating an effective learning environment;
- A dynamic technological and media-infused environment demands complex information capabilities and expert use of media and technology to build content knowledge and transfer capabilities to other contexts and opportunities;
- Engagement of students in an information environment, emphasizes competencies that enable critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration, and creativity and innovation;
- High intellectual quality of students' learning outcomes derives from students effective engagement with diverse information resources underpinned by an authentic, powerful, and collaborative pedagogy;
- Preparation of students to be digital citizens traverses the technological geography and the cultural and social norms of virtual environments, taking a 21st century perspective on knowledge and values that enable integrity, leadership, self- confidence, self-direction, adaptability , and productivity;
- The provision and maintenance of a supportive information environment, staffed by a certified school librarian establishes a culture of high expectations that are essential to high quality learning outcomes.

The participants in this study are educators who conceptualize school libraries as 21st century classrooms that provide the information- and technology-rich learning environments that young people confront in the world in which they live.

**School Culture and the School Library Concept** (pp 49-63) The participants provide a dynamic picture of the nature of a school culture that supports the school library as learning center linked to the learning going on in the school and the learning success of the school. These include:

- A powerful and pervasive belief that school libraries are “part of the way we do things here;”
- The vision and leadership of school principals who see the unique learning opportunities provided though the school library, despite the cost;
- School principals who have the courage to make a financial commitment to the school library;
- School librarians who understand that principal support and investment in school libraries is critical;
- School librarians who value a principal who understands what an effective school librarian looks like and who provides other forms of support in addition to adequate funding;
- Principals who are able to nurture a school culture that supports the most effective operation of the school library. Teachers are cognizant of whether the principal is committed to the school library and the ways in which s/he supports it;
- Teachers who are aware of the framework of school culture that accommodates the logistics that need to be in place for a school library to work;
- Faculty who support of the school library as a function of a culture of community, as well a

function of their educational goals for their students;

- Teachers who are encouraged and supported to value the school library as a place where they can collaborate and innovate, explore new technologies, learn new pedagogical approaches;
- A whole school that sees that the school library is not an isolated, independent unit in the school but a collaborative opportunity;
- Teachers who view collaboration as supportive of their teaching.

Part of the cultural dynamics of these participating schools is the high expectation that school librarians are primarily co-teachers who undertake an active role in engaging in shared instruction in diverse ways. Principals who support school libraries have established an open culture for the exchange of ideas among faculty. They think outside the box, take reasonable risks, try new things, and allow the educational ‘experts’ to do their jobs. They are delegators who trust their teachers. School librarians view trust of principals and teachers and students as confidence in their professional decisions and leadership of the school library, giving them autonomy to do their professional jobs and meet broader professional role expectations. They know that teachers develop trust from a respect for their instructional expertise and experience, and their capability as co-teachers working toward common curriculum standards. For principals, teachers and school librarians it is about collaboration, culture, and community. Without these supporting educational beliefs and a collaborative culture, it is difficult for the school library to be perceived as a learning center. The predominant activity observed in the school library was not information-centered, including the flow, management and organization of information; it was the learning in which students were engaged.

**Theme 2: In what ways, if any, does the school library contribute to school learning? (pp 63-154)**

Based on the evidence from the twelve focus groups who participated in this study, we make the following claims about how school libraries shape the learning environment:

- The school library environment aims to provide equitable and stable information access to all;
- The school library establishes a learning environment where students are guided by professionals to effectively utilize information and technology tools in ethical and safe ways;
- The school library is a communal information center that supports investigation and experimentation with information and technology to foster quality teaching that empowers learning across the school;
- For faculty, the school library, as a center of learning innovation, conducts substantial, cost-effective, hands-on professional development to faculty and staff through the cooperative design of learning experiences that integrate information and technology;
- The school library contributes quality teaching in schools through the provision of inquiry-based instruction implemented through instructional teams;
- The school library is an extension of the classroom that offers a central, safe place that removes barriers and constraints to learning with information resources and information technology;
- The school library offers services that are different from those provided in the classroom: It connects information and expertise at the intersection of digital and print information in and beyond the walls of the school;
- The school library is not only a place for information exchange and reading enrichment: It is the center for digital literacy;
- For students, the primary focus of the school library is on building capacity for critical engagement with information, with an emphasis the critical evaluation of sources, on the

critical interrogation of diverse sources of information, and on asking, thinking and creating.

The participants identified the following common characteristics of school libraries as learning centers:

- The school library is a multi-disciplinary learning space where all subjects are represented and supported;
- The school library's mosaic of knowledge and global access creates an environment where learning is respected and pursued, guided and nurtured in safe and critical ways;
- Learning in the school library is viewed as process that is discovered as students pursue personal information needs as well as curriculum-related learning. The school library is defined and distinguished as a place that helps them to learn how to learn;
- The school library is seen as a source of energy that supports the school's mission to produce literate and informed learners who can thrive in a digital, knowledge based world;
- As the hub of a learning network, the school library supports a community of learners and the exchange of ideas across the school and its global environment;
- The school library's centrality in the learning agenda of the school is attributed to the work of the school librarians;
- The role of the school librarian is central to learning because s/he is viewed as a teacher, and whose primary work centers on being an instructional partner with information- learning expertise;
- The unique contribution of the school librarian as teacher is the vision of learning through engagement with information and resources, and whose instructional role in the school makes it happen;
- The learning-centered work of the school librarian that enacts the vision plays a significant part in defining the school library as a learning center. It is the actions of the school librarians and teachers in the school that realize the vision, with the support of a principal who "lets the experts do their jobs";
- Teachers recognize the instructional expertise of school librarians and actively seek out this expertise, and consistently highlighted the sustained, active use of the school library by them and their students;
- Principals in the study identify the actions of school librarians as shaping, as well as supporting school culture of deep learning and preparation as citizen living and learning in a digital global world;
- Teaching and learning is seen as a major part of a school's culture, and principals acknowledged that their school librarians had an impact on teaching and learning;
- The school library offers a learning environment that is not based on "the right answer" prompted by rote learning, but on a more complex model of teaching and learning that is exploratory and highly motivational;
- Students want to be in the library. They view it as their information home and value the expert guidance they receive;
- Students like the informality of the school library environment where they can walk around, sit where they want, and talk to each other;
- The school library sets the stage for student-initiated inquiry;
- The school library allows learning to happen serendipitously;
- The school library is also an inviting place of learning for teachers;

- School librarians build virtual as well as physical environments for learning;
- The school library supports hybrid activities that connect real and virtual worlds of the school community.

How the School Library is Different from the Classroom (pp 57-63) The school library has long been viewed by educators as different from the classroom in the following ways:

- Differing content of learning, teaching methods, learning behaviors and learning outcomes;
- Diverse traditional and online collections;
- Access to information sources and technology, offering more choice of reading materials;
- A source of expensive technology;
- Students learning information and inquiry skills that are seen as life skills enabling them to function interdependently and independently in the digital world;
- Students learning information management skills;
- The school library as a home base for team planning for teachers;
- The school library as providing more constructivist, hands on learning;
- A more relaxed atmosphere as students learn in diverse ways;
- The information-learning expertise that the school librarian provides;
- The school library as an extension of the classroom, supporting enrichment activities and special needs learning.

**The School Library as Pedagogical Center** (pp 63-75) The school library as a pedagogical center emerges as the strongest statement of the instructional role of the school librarian, and the school library as a connector that enables:

- Students to connect curriculum learning and their personal interests; 27
- Teachers to connect disciplines to provide a richer interdisciplinary approach to learning;
- Teachers to connect to each other to provide the best learning experiences for students
- Students and teachers to connect to the wider world of information;

The connections are perceived to be “easy” because of the systems, processes and organization in place in the school library, and because of a philosophy and practice of “help” provided by the school librarians. The school library as connector was portrayed in many different ways:

- The school library connects with the values of a school district and with its school community;
- The school library connects the school and home through technology, and through the relationships the school librarian establishes;
- The school librarian is an information broker who connects people with resources;
- School librarians bring information and people together at the point of need;
- The school library is a digital library that has no walls;
- The school library is multi-disciplinary: It is where the disciplines meet in a real world setting;
- The school library, through information, breathes life into the curriculum and connects curriculum to the real world of students;
- The school library connects people to each other as they learn together;
- The school librarian connects the school library with the public library.

The school librarian’s role as connector firmly establishes the school as connected to the community,

the curriculum connected to the real world, and the school community connected to its stakeholders. In the role of teacher the school librarian makes the ultimate connection among the academic disciplines represented in the school curriculum and the instructional program.

**School Librarians as Co-Teachers** (pp 67-72) From the perspective of the participants in this study, the school library functions primarily as a pedagogical center for students and faculty. It is a common instructional zone for the whole school where students learn to learn through information led by professional school librarians. Focus groups portrayed the school librarian primarily as teacher who has the unique role of seeing the ‘big picture’ and pulling the academic disciplines together. As co-teachers:

- School librarians bring depth to learning by helping students and teachers develop information skills that lead to the retrieval and utilization of good information.;
- School librarians facilitate the integration of skill and content instruction;
- School librarians cannot do this alone; Collegiality grows from mutual intents and shared experiences as teachers;
- Teachers open their classrooms in order to collaborate because they recognize the value they derive from collaborating with the school librarian;
- Teachers see themselves as modeling collaboration for students;
- Teachers respect the school librarian as an educator with whom they can identify and on whom they can rely.

Principals are willing to support the acquisition of resources for the school library with an adequate budget because they perceive the school librarian as a good teacher who actively engages in curriculum planning. In some of the focus groups teachers expressed deep emotion about how school librarians helped them to be better teachers. Principals recognize the need to provide professional development for school librarians that enables them to be good teachers and good teachers of teachers.

### **School Librarian as Teacher of Teachers** (pp 140-146)

Participants identified the information-learning expertise of the school librarians, and the co-teaching role of the school librarian as not limited to students. Rather it extended to considerable in-school training of teachers. The school librarians were positioned and seen to deliver effective professional development with ongoing support. Because the professional development offered by the school librarian is hands-on, teachers feel that they are learning something useful, and are more likely to use it in the context in which they learned it. The school librarian plays a dynamic role in building collaborative and collegial relationships among staff members through sharing of information-learning expertise, ideas, problems and solutions as everyone works together to build a better school. The wider school culture of investing in school libraries, and giving the school librarians freedom to implement professional expertise gives rise to a pervasive notion of school libraries as part of a ‘culture of help’ in schools. School librarians take an active role in nurturing this help, which creates further ripples of help.

### **Qualities of Effective School Librarians** (pp 146-154)

The educators, particularly principals, participating in this study often refer to the qualities of the school librarian as the major factor in the success of the school library program. The school library reflects the dispositions and personality traits of the librarian. Principals in particular recognize the importance of library staff in the effectiveness of the library program.

The qualities of effective school librarian continually emerged from focus group discussions:

- Being resilient;
- Being non-judgmental with students and teachers;
- Building an atmosphere of open communication;
- Being willing to go the extra mile to be supportive of teaching and learning;
- Actively building a profile of the school library as an active learning center;
- Having high visibility as teachers and works to sustain this as a priority;
- Being sociable and accessible, inclusive and welcoming;
- Being the living antithesis of the librarian stereotype;
- Loving to learn and being a lifelong learner who wants to share knowledge and expertise;
- Having a strong “help” orientation, i.e. this is about learning, not the library!
- Focusing not so much on their libraries, but on their commitment to enabling multiple learning needs to be met;
- Being solution-oriented;
- Creating the ethos of the library that is an invitation to learning., a place to be, do and become;
- Having high expectations for colleagues and for students;
- Liking and caring about young people and having flexibility in creating a learning environment that appeals to them;
- Being leaders and instructional innovators who are not afraid to take risks, be creative, and do what best serves learners of all ages

### **Theme 3: What do students learn through their interaction and engagement with the school library? (pp 75-154)**

To this end, the core capabilities developed by school libraries for students that emerge from the focus group conversations include:

- a. Resource-based capabilities:** Seeking, accessing and evaluating information sources in a variety of formats, including print-based and digital literacies, social and cultural artifacts, and technological tools.
- b. Knowledge-based capabilities:** Creation, construction and sharing of the products of knowledge that demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding.
- c. Reading-to-learn capabilities:** Comprehension, interpretation, communication, and dissemination of text in multiple formats to enable the development of meaning and understanding.
- d. Thinking-based capabilities:** Substantive engagement with information through higher order thinking, and critical analysis that generate original ideas.
- e. Learning management capabilities:** Preparation, planning and successfully undertaking a curriculum-based inquiry unit.
- f. Personal and interpersonal capabilities:** Learning how to learn as independent learner and collaborative learners.

### **The Nature of Inquiry Teaching in the School Library (pp 75-104)**

The school library contributes directly to quality teaching in schools through the provision of a unique kind of inquiry-based instruction that is based on research in the information and learning sciences and implemented through instructional teams. This inquiry-based instruction gives emphasis to intellectual agency for developing deep knowledge and understanding, rather than that of information collection



and skills of finding information. One of the key attributes of inquiry is building excitement, interest and motivation for learning, and engaging students in the active process of discovery and knowledge development. Teachers acknowledged that working with library resources provides rich information and a variety of perspectives not available from the textbook. They recognize the multi-modal nature of literacies that have emerged from the digital environment and the importance of addressing these literacies. They saw that inquiry-based learning engages students as content providers who work on- and off-line to produce creative products, or learning outcomes that represent what they have learned. Students' capacity to undertake quality research through engaging with information was recognized as an important aspect of learning in all curriculum areas. The instructional role of the school librarian was explicitly linked to improvement in students' research capabilities. Teachers understand that acquiring information and research skills is a slow and gradual process, but allows students to find their own style of research within a structured framework provided for them. The staged process of inquiry-based learning is valued by classroom teachers. Students are not left to their own devices to undertake substantial research projects. **Rather, the inquiry-centered instruction provided jointly by collaborating teams was carefully planned and staged to take students through a research journey, carefully diagnosing particular learning needs to ensure successful research.** Part of the inquiry-centered approach to learning through the school library is modeling the inquiry process with teachers. Teachers are trained in the process of doing research by the school librarians, and as a result, have honed their capacity of inquiry:

In this study, a key criterion for selecting the schools was the high levels of instructional collaborations reported in these schools, and documented in Phase 1 of this study. Collaboration emerged as the central dynamic of enabling the school library and the work of the school librarian to be integrated so widely and so deeply into the learning fabric of the school. Teachers talked freely about collaboration with the school librarian. There was consensus that collaboration is the key ingredient in the success of school libraries in these schools. It was the instructional norm. And the norm was teams. They recognized the contribution of the school librarian's expertise in research and digital technology as critical to the collaboration. Underpinning the notion of "team work" and "team players" is the mutuality of working towards one common goal – enabling core curriculum content standards. The school library was portrayed as a common ground across the school for meeting individual and special needs. This was particularly identified by teachers of at-risk students and literacy teachers who saw the school librarians as providing targeted information, targeted instruction, and guidance to meet unique learning needs.

Data from Phase 1 clearly indicate that information literacy instruction is extensively undertaken by school librarians in New Jersey schools. In this study, there was little reference to "information literacy" or "information skills". This is not to say that these were not developed:

Participants tended to focus more on specific skills that needed to be taught, rather than speaking more generically about "information literacy". These include basic information finding skills, thinking skills, and the multimodal literacies that ensure comprehension of what is read, in print or digital formats, and what is viewed and/or heard. Known as transliteracies, they include literacies include visual literacy, print literacy, media literacy, digital literacy, and technological literacies.

Of all of the resources available through the school library, the participants focused strongly on access to and use of databases and the quality information that they provide. Database use appeared to be strongly integrated into processes of developing research skills, learning to access quality scholarly information, and their use was often set up as a resource expectation by the classroom teachers. Some school libraries provide access to databases outside of the school, and this is viewed as a valuable

resource:

### **Digital citizenship** (pp104-113)

In relation to life skills, the strongest set of capabilities identified by the participants centered on developing capabilities around digital citizenship. The instructional role of the school librarian is a significant mechanism for the development of students as digital citizens. Participants highlighted a number of dimensions which they saw as central to the work of their school libraries:

1. Recognizing quality information in multiple modes and across multiple platforms.
2. Accessing quality information across diverse formats and platforms.
3. Participating in digital communication in collaborative and ethical ways to share ideas, work together and to produce knowledge.
4. Using sophisticated information technology tools to search, access, create and demonstrate knowledge in new ways.
5. Learning appropriate ethical approaches and behaviors in relation to use of digital technologies.
6. Understanding the dangers inherent in the use of complex information technologies and learning strategies to protect identity, personal information, and safety.
7. Acquiring technical and behavioral approaches to develop digital etiquette and security.

The participants acknowledge that students are already actively engaged in a technology-led participatory culture, including Facebook, message boards, gaming communities, and other online communities. They are using technology tools to produce new genres, mash-ups, and outcomes. Some are blogging and communicating across geographical and cultural boundaries. It is important that they learn the dispositions, skills, and capabilities for working collaboratively in ethical and safe ways.

Digital citizenship includes the important dimension of information ethics. The participants expressed deep concern for students as safe and ethical users of information and saw that the school library as the central dynamic for enabling this. The library was seen as a microcosm of the complex information landscape and a place where appropriate ethical behaviors could be taught, modeled and developed, and then reinforced by teachers in the classroom. School libraries give strong attention to students developing ethical approaches to information use, as evidenced in instruction centering on the appropriation of information, acknowledging and citing the ideas of others, and understanding the ethics of information ownership.

### **Literacy support** (pp 113-121)

Participants identified the school library as a major contributor to developing and supporting literacy in the traditional sense: Reading motivation; reading engagement; reading fluency; reading comprehension; sustained reading; strategic reading; reading for pleasure; and reading remediation. Access to diverse, quality reading materials is viewed as essential for nurturing and sustaining students as active readers, and for supporting individual reading interests. Participants acknowledge that sustained reading that develops comprehension is promoted by the school librarian who guides student reading choices and encourages enjoyment of reading. The school library provides diverse media that promote transliteracies. Reading flows into career choices and the writing process, and teachers value school library support of conventions of citation and writing formal papers. Participants in the study identified a range of outcomes from the sustained focus of the school library on reading and literacy development such as student achievement, test scores, vocabulary development, and fostering interactions around reading. These outcomes are the result of supporting emerging literacy development for older elementary students and adolescents after they learn to decode and read.

Without this support and deep and sustained reading, comprehension may not develop on its own.

### **Social and Affective Learning from Information through Inquiry in the School Library (pp 121-127)**

School libraries contribute to the development of social and collaborative skills. The participants identified a range of social and affective behaviors and dispositions that are nurtured through the school library, including aspects of emotional development, and developing social, interpersonal and communication skills that are important for living and working outside of school. Key dimensions identified include:

- Developing communication skills that are part of doing and presenting research;
- Participating in cooperative team work in the school library which helps students how to learn to learn from each other;
- Helping students build self-esteem and self-efficacy;
- Developing students' good behavior and social skills;
- Promoting a sharing learning culture;
- Developing empathy in students for diverse viewpoints;
- Developing personal management skills as well as social skills in learning contexts;
- Developing online social processes and communication skills.

In the participating schools, learning is viewed as a social activity, and conversation is a critical shared activity to foster learning. School librarians have embraced the library as place for talking and developing relationships that support teaching and learning. The library is also a knowledge space. With emphasis of these school libraries on inquiry, thinking, reflecting and communicating, the school library is positioned as a knowledge space, rather than an information place.

### **The school library is a surrogate home (pp 127-131)**

The school library provides access to resources, technology, and information and instructional services that are not available in the homes of the school community. Many principals pointed out that communities surrounding their schools are not wealthy and the presence of a school library serves as an information environment for all. This also applied to having space available for students to engage with information and to give them the appropriate support for their learning.

### **The school library as a safe place (pp 127-131)**

The notion of the school library as a safe place was identified in all of the focus groups. "Safe" was interpreted from a range of perspectives: A place where students can engage with information knowing that they can get individual guidance; a place where they can explore diverse topics, even controversial topics, in privacy and without interruption; a place where they know information they access is trustworthy; a place where they can retreat and work without interruption and intervention by other students without any kind of threat; a place where they can obtain individual mentoring as needed without any kind of judgment.

### **Assessment of Student Learning in the School Library (pp 131-140)**

There is a considerable body of research which has sought to establish the school library's impact on student achievement as measured by standardized test scores. Surprisingly, this did not emerge as a strong theme in the focus groups. There was considerable discussion of the longer-term impacts of the

school library in terms of learning outcomes. These center on the development of a range of capabilities and dispositions that can last a life time and have salience beyond schooling and not merely school-based achievement: Navigating the information landscape, career skills, digital citizenship, ethical behaviors, and lifelong learning capabilities.

According to the participants in this study, independent learning is seen as an approach to learning where learners invest time and effort into mastering a range of capabilities to become self-sufficient, able to apply a range of skills to act autonomously and with self-direction. In doing so, they exhibit responsibility for their own learning. In this study the participants perceived lifelong learning to be an extension of, and outcome of independent learning. It is perceived as the continuous building of capabilities, and application of these capabilities beyond school and throughout life. The students' learning experiences provided through the school library were viewed as "lasting" and encompassed a range of capabilities – motivation and passion for reading, engaging with information as experts, using information to solve problems, accessing a variety of information sources beyond the school library, and experiencing success as a key outcome.

Transfer of learning was viewed as the application of skills and knowledge that were learned in one situation to another situation – another learning situation at school, or outside of school, and recognizing the value of the instruction they have received as they move into other walks of learning, such as university, and the work life. The notion of transfer of learning was not limited to students. Teachers made explicit reference to their own learning through instructional collaborations and learning from each other and the school librarian. This shapes their own work as teachers, particularly empowering their teaching and improving the quality of their teaching.

#### **Theme 4: How do Educators Envision their Future School Libraries** (pp 154-172)

Are school libraries a thing of the past? Educators in this study saw the high expectations for and outcomes of school libraries in their schools as a rationale for more funding for school libraries. Despite the current budget crisis, these educators want larger libraries and increased staffing.

##### **The Vision for More Library Space** (pp 154-163)

Teachers wanted more space to develop instructional opportunities. Collaborative learning was viewed as a teaching method that requires more school library space enabling teachers to differentiate to meet diverse student needs. Recognizing the social nature of social and collaborative learning in the school library, some educators wanted a coffee shop in the library. Other considerations that drove teachers' wish lists was the perceived need for more technology to support specific content needs such as: Writing labs to facilitate the writing process; Language labs with immediate connections to resources; More computer space to enhance transliteracy experiences; Additional need for small, quiet spaces for reading; Teleconferencing facilities; An information technology place for teachers. The value of the library was clearly seen in its intersection with print and digital resources, and there was no indication that the print-based resources should be reduced. At the same time, it was acknowledged that digital information services were expanding, placing increased demand on technology and the need to continuously improve the technology infrastructure, accompanied by specialist technical expertise.

##### **Increased Staffing** (pp 163-164)

Educators saw the need for more staffing in the library centered on instructional opportunities centering on the creative engagement with information and information technology to meet content standards and to provide significant life learning experiences for students. Focus groups were interested in having more time for instructional collaborations, which requires more school librarians. They saw that this would continue to build even more widespread curriculum integration and

strengthen the interdisciplinary learning and teaching taking place and get more teachers involved in the school library. From the perspective of the school librarians, this would enable them to interact more holistically in the information-to-knowledge journey of the students, from instructional planning to assessment.

### **The Threat of Budget Cuts (pp 169-172)**

Participants saw the future of school libraries threatened by budget cuts in education. This surfaced in several focus groups. These concerns were about the political climate and education, and not just in the state of New Jersey, and the potential negative impact of reduced budgets on the work of the school library. Here are educators committed to making a difference in their students' learning and expressing concern that this is not valued by government.

Participating educators recognize information as the raw material of learning. Unmediated access to vast amounts of information through digital technology calls for a pedagogy of intervention and help. The school library is an innovation that introduced a mature concept of help as integral to the delivery of information services to an educational setting. More importantly, school libraries support standards-based teaching and school curricula, but they go beyond minimal performance that defines achievement of basic skills measured by standardized tests scores to scaffold learning to attain more complex critical thinking that results in student creativity and innovation. While schools need to meet basic requirements for student achievement, this is a means to an end, and as such is no longer sufficient for preparing students for living and working in an Information Age that presents an increasingly complex information infrastructure. Through the services of school libraries schools can meet the challenge of producing a multi-literate population of young people who can be the traditions of scholarship and academic accomplishments that define our culture as a nation.

### **If school librarians don't do it, who will?**